

**SERMON**

**PREACH'D THE**

**Sunday before Easter**

**IN**

**WESTMINSTER-ABBY.**

**PSAL. cx. Ver. 7.**

*He shall drink of the Brook in the  
way, therefore shall he lift up the  
Head.*

**T**HIS Psalm is more frequently  
quoted, and called into Testi-  
mony, by Christ and his Apostles,  
than almost any other in the whole Book

of *Psalms* : Because it contains , as the Contents in our *Bible* also declare , a Prophecy of the Kingdom , Priesthood, Conquest, Passion, and (in the later part of the Words now read) of the Exaltation of *Christ*. My Text is the lowest Round of his Descent, but that by which he did climb to the highest of his Ascent : His drinking of the troubled Waters, the Waters turned into Blood, like those of *Egypt*, which God had ordered to lye in his way here on Earth, before he should drink of the Waters of Life and Glory. But because Parabolical Divinity, Divinity that runs in Parables and Figures, is not so useful for Instruction, till it be reduced to more ordinary and common Speech : The meaning of *Christ's drinking of the Brook in the way*, is conceived to be an allusion to the practice of some great Captain or Conqueror, who having born the brunt of the Day, the Sun and the Dust, and holding his Enemies now in chase, refuses not, in his thirst and eager pursuit, to drink of any Waters, however muddy,

muddy, that present themselves. And this Figure, of likening Christ's Passion to the *drinking of a Cup*, is so frequent in the Gospel, and well known, that it needs not be insisted on. *The Cup*, says he, *which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* And again, *O my Father!* if it be possible, let this Cup depart from me, and the like.

Now this being the most probable account of the Words, they divide themselves into these two General Parts: The Humiliation or Passion of Christ; and the Issue of it, his Exaltation. His Humiliation or Passion is expressed in these words, *He shall drink of the Brook in the way*; his Exaltation in these, *Therefore shall he lift up the Head*. I shall refer his Exaltation to its proper Season near approaching, and insist only, as the occasion requires, on his Humiliation, his drinking of the Brook in the way: In which, I shall consider these Three Things.

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I. The loath'd Necessity Christ underwent, of drinking of a troubled and muddy Brook.

II. The Occasion that put him upon it, his eagerness in pursuit of the Enemy.

III. The willingness, notwithstanding, of his drinking of it, he drank it to quench his Thirst.

I begin, First, *with the loath'd Necessity Christ underwent, of drinking of a troubled and muddy Brook.*

Our Redemption was the Work of the whole Trinity. *God the Father* was the first Mover and Contriver of the Mystery, who, out of his Goodness and Mercy to Mankind, stipulated or covenanted with Christ, (as 'tis recorded, *Esa. 53.*) that when he had made his Soul [or Life] an Offering for Sin, he should see the Travail of his Soul, and should be satisfied. *God the Son* readily and chearfully accepted the Conditions. And *God the Holy-Ghost* continually assisted and bore Testimony to the Work with Signs and Wonders.

Now



Now in Christ's part or undertaking, there was something grievous to undergo, as Pain ; and something that was odious, as Guilt ; and in reference to both of these, his Passion is called, The taking of a Drink or Potion. In respect of the Pain he endured, it was a bitter Potion, a Drink like the Waters of *Marah*, of which, the Children of *Israel* could not drink for their bitterness. Or rather, like the Waters spoken of in the *Revelations*, of which, 'tis recorded, That Men dyed, because of their bitterness ; for such were the Waters of the Brook Christ drank, their bitterness was not only offensive to his Taste, but mortal to his Person. But because the Allusion in my Text points not so much at the dolorous part of his Passion, as at the odious and loathsome part of it, I shall reflect only on the last.

And if we compute the Sufferings of Christ for us, according to his own estimation, we shall find, That 'twas not the Foreknowledge that his Body should be torn with Scourges, his lacerated Face spit on, his Hands

Hands and Feet rent with the Nails of the Cross, and the like, which made him *Sorrowful unto Death*, but that he was reckon'd among Transgressors; nay, reckon'd, as *St. Paul* reckon'd himself, *The chiefest of Transgressors*; more yet, The only Transgressor: For God laid upon him, as the Apostle says, *the Iniquity of us all*. *Salomon*, as in other things, judg'd wisely, when he said, *Sin is a Reproach to a People*: For it affects not only with Guilt, but with Ignominy; and, as other Infirmities in Men are Miseries, Sin is a Disgrace. And yet notwithstanding the Disgracefulness and Odiousness of Sin, Christ was content, for our sakes, to own the hateful Title of a Sinner; tho' he were the Son of God, to be counted a Son of Belial. *I bear in my Bosom*, says he, as the Psalmist makes him complain, *the Reproach of many People*. Other Shames, proceeding from his Mean Parentage, and the Contumelies of Men, he bore with no Regret, as 'tis said, *He despised the Shame*. But this was a Shame, that he was ashamed of; That as his Adversaries

versaries had calumniated him as a Wicked Doer, he should be seen to suffer as a real Malefactor. Innocence is not only averse to Be, but to be Thought a Criminal. And for him, *that was the Holy One of God*, whose Scile or Title was the Prince of Righteousness, and the Righteousness of the World, to be lookt upon for a time by God, by Angels, and by Men, nay by his Own Self, as the Person in whom met all the Violences, the Fraud, the Turpitudes, the Profligate Acts of the whole World, this was *Odii patio* indeed, a truly hateful and loathsome Portion, and we ought more tenderly to resent his sufferings in this kind, than the sharpest Inflictions he underwent for us.

Now if this be so, That the assuming of our Sins, is indeed so ink some a Portion to Christ; it follows certainly in reason, That we should press him to taste it no oftner than is needful. The time past of our lives, as St. Peter says, may suffice us to have wrought the Will of the Gentiles; when we walk'd in lasciviousness, lust, excess of wine,

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and the like : But as the Apostles in the first Council at *Jerusalem*, impos'd on the Gentiles no Observations of the Law, but what were *Necessary*: So let us impose on Christ only *things Necessary*, our Sins that are past, and cannot be recall'd, and such as will sometimes surprize us, be our Care never so sincere, and we shall find these numerous and bad enough ; but let us not, after the manner of Drunkards, force superfluous Cups on Christ, more out of Riot, than Reason : for these his Soul will doubly abhor, as well for the Causelesness, as Sinfulness of them. Did we weigh Christ's antipathy, even to the least Obliquity, we could not obtrude upon him such gross, enormous, and scandalous Offences as we do. Says the *Psalmist*, *The wicked speak well of the covetous, whom God abhorreth*. Covetousness, which Men take for a Wise Sin, Christ abhors the folly of, when 'tis laid on him ; Lust and Pride, which are their most splendid and delightful Sins, Christ detests and blushes at, when they are cast on him ; their Oaths, their Angers, their Intemperances,

since, are so much Puddle or Sink-water, to his Holy Relish. Let us take heed therefore, we presume not too far upon his Patience and Goodness, even those drunken Debauchees we mention'd, who delight in nothing but Extravagance, and who out of a frolick of Mirth and Madness will sometimes drink, not only what's excessive, but Noxious; will not yet make such their Extravagance their Ordinary Beveridge and Diet: And we may assure our selves, though Christ, in execution of his Fathers Counsel, was once content to taste of the *Marie* Brook in his way, he took no delight in the thing it self, he will not go out of his way to drink of it; but if the noisome Potion be too often obruded on him, he will turn his Face at last from it, and refuse it, as he did from the Gall and Vinegar on the Cross: Or else nauisiating the polluted Cup of Sinners, he will say to those that tender it, as the Angel in the *Revelations* does to the Unreclaim'd Sinners there, *He that is Unjust, let him be Unjust still, and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still,* and



so seal them up in their Sins to Eternal Destruction. And tho in strict speaking, Christ never bore the Guilt of Mankind otherwise, than in bearing the Punishment of it, to exempt them from it, but not so, as to become a Guilty Person Himself: And again, tho he finish't his Sufferings on the Cross, and can suffer no more than he has done: Yet as the Apostle says, Men may Grieve the Holy Spirit of Christ *i. e.* Do things offensive and hateful to him; And tho they cannot affect him with any Evil, they may pull his Displeasure upon themselves; and therefore my Admonition will not be vain or improper: I pass to the Second particular I observ'd, The Occasion that Engaged Christ to drink of the Troubl'd Brook,

*His Eagerness in pursuit of the Enemy.*

As Barak was stirr'd up by an Extraordinary and Heroick Spirit against the Host of *Sisera*, and slacken'd not his Expedition for any Incommodity or Danger that threaten'd his own Person, till he

had



had utterly broken the tyrannical Yoke, with which the *Canaanites* so mightily oppressed *Israel*. So the Captain of our Salvation excited by the same Divine Spirit, that drove him at first into the Wilderness to Combat the Great Enemy of Mankind, having now broken his united Power, and holding his routed Forces in chace, slacken'd not his Pursuit for any Personal Incommodity or Danger, but computing the Blessed Effect of his Conquest, look't upon the Cross as a triumphant Chariot, and the Envenomed Waters he drank in the way, as the wholesome Streams of a Christal Fountain.

The Enemies with whom Christ did conflict, were Three. Sin, Death, and the Devil. But as 'tis said of the Three Testimonies that bear Witness on Earth, the Spirit, the Water, and the Bloud, *These three agree in One*: So we may say of the Three Enemies with whom Christ contested, they were Three, but agreed in One; And the Power of all was broken, in breaking the Power of One. Christ by subduing Sin, cancell'd by the same Act, the

the Wages or Punishment of it, Death; and turn'd the Executioner or Pay-master, the Devil out of his Office. Here I shall therefore consider Two things. The Quality of the Enemies Christ destroy'd. And the End or Riddance of them, they are destroy'd.

1. The Quality of the Enemies, they were Spiritual: as Christ said, *His Kingdom was not of this World*: So the Enemies he destroy'd were not Temporal Enemies. They are not Persons, but Things, which carry with them the greatest danger. The Prophets indeed, when they would make a forcible impression on the Minds of Men to deter them from Sin, put to all their Rhetorick to describe Outward Enemies, and Corporal Destructions: As for example, *God will bring a Nation upon you from far, it is a Mighty Nation, their Quiver is as an open Sepulchre, and the Land that was as a pleasant Garden before them, shall be where they have past like a Wilderness*. And Daniel portrays the Monarchs, that should in after-times subject Israel, under the dreadful shapes

shapes of Lions, Bears, Leopards, &c. Beasts, whose Nature is to rend and to devour. But if we consider rightly, we shall find, that they are not the Enemies of the greatest Noise, that do the greatest Hurt; nor of the terriblest Forms and Aspects, that work the terriblest Destructions. The sly, soft, insinuating Enemy, Sin, that solicits us with an Angel's Face, and sheaths its Mortal Sting within its painted Tayl, that sits at the Table, and lyes down in the Bed with us, that mingles it self in all our Employments, pretends one while to refresh our Spirits under the notion of Pleasure, another while to advance our Fortunes by Honour and Riches, and the like, is the most fatal Enemy, and full of Danger of all others. Sin is a familiar Mischief, which while it sooths us, and proposes Advantages, more certainly confounds us: 'Tis an invisible Evil, which is often hid from our selves when we commit it, as *Job's* Weapon was from *Abner*; and strikes us, while it kisses us; wounds us to Death, while it friendly

friendly embraces us. This subtil Enemy, and invincible by Flesh and Blood, and the Punishment of it, Death, and the Author of it, the Devil, Christ conquered, and not only so, but, as I observed,

In the second place, Destroyed, and rid them out of the way. Sin is destroyed, Death is destroyed, Satan is destroyed, by the Prowess of our Barak, while he was here on Earth, he did unto them, as the other Barak did unto Sisera, and unto Jabin. How was that? He brought them to utter Destruction, *They perisb'd*, as 'tis said, *at Endor, and became as the Dung of the Earth, the River Kison swept them away*, there remained nothing of them, but what is recorded of their Overthrow in *Deborah's Epinikion*, or Song of Victory. So in the like manner, there remains none of our Spiritual Enemies, but an Account of what they had been, in a semblable Triumphant Song, in which, the Apostle celebrates Christ's Victory, *O Death! where is thy Sting? O Grave! where is thy Victory, &c?* We may say, Where is Death?

Death? Where is Guilt? Where is the Kingdom or Power of Satan? They are swept away as by a rapid Torrent, or lest as the Dung of the Earth, partly by the Merit of Christ's Death, partly by the mighty Efficacy of his Grace.

But, you will say, if this be so, That our Spiritual Enemies are utterly destroyed, why are we still warned and cautioned against them? Why do we so frequently here inculcate, *Let not Sin reign in your mortal Bodies: Resist the Devil, and he will fly from you, &c.* Why are we still frightened with the empty Names and Ghosts of Death and Hell? Made to fight with Shadows, and things of no Being? And do not rather entertain the Antinomian Doctrine, which says, There is no Condemnation of Believers since Christ suffered, no guilt of Sin, whatever the Transgressions of the Faithful be.

To this, I answer: Christ cannot be denied to have destroyed our Spiritual Enemies, when he has reduced them to that state, that unless we please to recover and

restore them, they are in all respects destroyed to us; utterly extinct, unless we simply and wilfully revive them; unless we say to their dead Bodies, Live; to these three rotten Carcasses of our confounded Enemies, Come forth of your Destruction, and reassume your former Being and Dominion over us. Indeed, in this case, as St. Paul says, of giving the Law to a Stubborn Will, *Sin revives, and we dye*. Christ has destroyed the Power of our Adversaries, but not the Faculties of our Souls; their Ability to hurt us, but not our own Ability to hurt our selves; he has rendered the powerful Prince of the Air a poor precarious Cheat, that may deceive those that are willing to be deceived, but he can compel no man to sin; he has made the Grave, so dreadful heretofore to all that entered into it, a safe Dormitory to the Righteous: But if we are resolved and determined to give our selves up to the Bondage of Sin, Death and Satan, God and Christ are not obliged to with-hold us from it. I proceed to my third Particular:

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*The Willingness of Christ's drinking of  
the Brook.*

Drinking, implies Thirst; and drinking of muddy and polluted Waters, implies excess of Thirst; and such was Christ's to effect our Salvation: Says he to his Disciples, *With desire I have desired to eat of this Passover with you.* What Passover was that? Even his last, and not so much in regard of the Feast it self, as that it drew on the Consummation of our Redemption. In another place, says he, *I have a Baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitned till it be accomplished?* He shewed, as I may say, a Passion, to undergo his Passion. I deny not, that Christ had an Aversion and Reluctancy to the Cup of his Passion, joyned with his Willingness to drink it. The *Monothelits*, a kind of refined *Arrians*, affirmed, That Christ had but one Nature, and consequently but one Will: But tho he had two different Natures and Wills, the one was ever subordinate to the other,

the Human to the Divine; and however he did abhor Pain, as Man; when 'twas God's Injunction, he refused not to undergo it, being the *Son of Man*.

And 'twas this Obedience in Christ which God so much delighted in, and which he loves no less when he meets in his Saints and Servants; when he sees, that whatsoever Natural Debate they may have upon the Injunctions he lays on them, yet Grace gets the upper hand of the Flesh, and the last Resolution of their Heart, is, to resign their Likings to his; and when this is the Issue of the Contest, the foregoing Difficulty does not diminish, but adds to the Glory of the Victory. But then this must not countenance a Slothfulness and Backwardness to God's Service: For as he loves a chearful Giver of Alms, so he loves also a chearful Performer of all other Christian Duties: And if Men draw back in their Service to him, complain of every Step towards it, as painful; of every Prayer, as tedious; of every Command, as an Oppression; they clearly confess, their  
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Obedience would rather be Disobedience; and that they approve not God's ways, tho' they walk in them; and with such Sacrifices he is not well pleased. Even the Gentiles were persuaded, That those Beasts that led to the Altar with struggling and reluctance, were ungrateful to the Gods, and unlucky to the Offerers. But we may be sure, when our Duty, as St. Paul speaks, *is done of necessity, and not of a ready mind*, it is never acceptable to God. When the Faithful therefore give their Money to the Poor more liberally and chearfully than other Men, 'tis not that they are ignorant of the Power Money has in the World: Or when they are more forward to lay down their Lives for the Gospel, 'tis not again that they are insensible of Pain, or hate their own Flesh, but they are content to sacrifice those things that are dear to them, for those that are yet dearer; their Temporal Concerns, for their Eternal. God has ordered these Performances to lye in their way to Heaven, and, as our Lord said, To do his Father's Will, was more  
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than Meat and Drink to him, and Life it self: So it is to them.

I shall only draw some Uses from what has been said, and conclude.

And First, let us consider the Malignant and Pernicious Nature of Sin, which however easily we slide into, we have reason to dread and abhor, that could not be purged away, after 'twas once committed, without the Concurrent Power of the Trinity; the Guilt of it removed by less means, than the World was created.

Secondly, let us imitate, what in us lyes, the Goodness of the Trinity in our Redemption, especially the Obedience of the Son, who is set out also to us for an Example, says St. Paul, *Let the same Mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus.* What was that? *He became Obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross.* And 'tis our Duty to make his Obedience in the particular of our Salvation, the Pattern of our Obedience in all things. When God therefore shall cause Bitter or Unfavoury Waters to glide in our way, we are not  
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to nautiate, or make fowre Faces, much less, to turn out of the way to avoid them. To speak without a Figure, We are not to seek Redress in any Evil whatsoever that befalls us by Unlawful Means; to forfeit our Innocence, to procure or preserve our Prosperity; but meekly, after the Example of Christ, to accept of the Lot God has appointed us, and to bear it courageously. At our Baptism, we were enrolled Christ's Soldiers, and vowed to fight manfully under his Banner, against *Sin, the World, and the Devil*, and he has armed us at all Points against these Enemies with his Word, and with his Spirit: And if when a Cross comes in our way, when an Adversity or Temptation befalls us, we poorly sink under it, or decline it by a sinful Flight, we may be likened to those Cowardly Champions, who when they are casked and plumed, and bravely mounted, bright in Arms, and big of Limbs, recoil from the Dangers the course of their Adventures lead them to or more recreantly close with the Adversaries, they  
took

took an Oath to destroy. There are two sorts of Streams or Torrents that break forth and flow in the way of Christians Persecutions, and more ordinary and common Afflictions; as loss of Friends, Health, Goods, and the like. Now if, as Christ did, we look upon both these, as Guests of God's sending, as Springs of his opening, as Storms of his raising, and behave our selves under them as we ought, he will certainly lift up our Heads at the last. As the Psalmist says, *Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West*: So Afflictions come from no one Point of the Compass more than from another, but from God's gracious Dispensation and Disposal; and if we are cast down in the time of Adversity, we faint in the very Arms of Providence; despond, while we are in the Protection of the Almighty.

The third and last Use, I wish we may all make from the joynt Concurrence of the whole Trinity, to redeem Mankind from Sin and Damnation, is, That every  
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particular Person would hold himself obliged to set to his utmost Power to destroy Sin, first in himself, and afterwards in others.

In a Common Fire, all run forth to quench it; and the Law says, Upon a sudden Invasion, *Omnis homo Miles*, every Man is a Soldier and an Officer that can oppose it, the Publick Danger gives them Commission. And when Sin overruns and harasses a Land, not only the Magistrate and Preacher, but every good Christian, ought, by Word and Example, to restrain the Contagion to his power. The Prophet *Isaiah* says of his Times, *The Righteous Perish, and no Man layeth it to heart.* That was utterly a fault, that the Righteous should be taken away, and there should be no Mifs of them, no Reflections made on their Loss: But it is no less blameable, where it may be said, *The Wicked perish, and no Man layeth it to heart*, no Man has Remorse, that so many Souls, for whose Salvation Heaven has shewed so great

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Solicitude, should be eternally lost : The Primitive Christians had the Honour to destroy Gentilism; and to plant the Gospel at the Expence of their Lives; and we, their Posterity, must not think it enough to enjoy the Fruit of their Labours and Sufferings, like worthless Heirs, that take Possession of the Industrious Gettings of their Ancestors, and think nothing is required of them, but to embezzle them. As Noble a Task attends us, as did them; which is, to preserve what they Planted; to keep God's Vineyard, the Church, from Thorns and Bryars, corrupt Doctrin and evil Manners; a wicked Profession of Christianity being more Odious to God, than blind Idolatry; neither has it been found a less difficult and dangerous Undertaking in all Times to Reform Sinners, than to Convert Infidels.

In the great Revolution in this Kingdom 1660, when the Church and Monarchy were restored, and all things re-established upon the ancient Foundations;  
when

when the Wronged received Right; and the Doers of Wrong, Mercy; when the Bounty of Heaven was poured out in overflowing Measures on us, and the Joy of the Land was great; our Work was not yet done. But our Prosperity, in a very short time, was again darkened by Judgments as Extraordinary and Amazing, as had been our Blessings, viz. by a deplorable Mortality in the *Royal Family*, by a War, a Pestilence, a Fire, all Prodigious in their kinds, as well as Punishments; the Emulous Love between the Prince and People vanished, Intestine Discontents were a new fomented, no Six Months passed, but something Fatal threatened, and the Kingdom reeled, and the Throne tottered, till in one and the same Age we saw it a second Time fall. And why was this? Because Reformation of Life was not added to the Reformation of Secular Affairs; the Practice of Religion joyned to the true Profession of it; God's Mercies acknowledged and celebrated, as well as enjoyed:

Nay, Atheism was countenanced, things Sacred made a Jest, Innocence look-  
ed upon as the Livery of Fools,  
Whoredom and Riot were seen in Exal-  
tation, and the like. And it is no won-  
der, after such high Irreligion and Ingrat-  
itude to God, that we have beheld such  
sudden and strange Mutations in the State;  
the Wonder only is, That we are not  
Extirpated; that while we have not al-  
lowed God to have a Being, that he has  
allowed us still to be a People and Na-  
tion. But the greatest Astonishment of  
all, is, *The Punishment, we have suffered,*  
*is a Mercy; the Judgment fallen upon us,*  
*a Preservation and Deliverance!* And this  
Riddle of the Divine Goodness makes  
our Condition unintelligible and doubt-  
ful to our selves: *When the Lord turned*  
*the Captivity of Sion,* says the Psalmist,  
*then were we like to those that Dream;*  
*i. e.* When Cyrus sent out his Decree,  
That the Israelites should return, and re-  
build their City and Temple, their Feli-  
city was so unexpected and amazing, that  
they

they knew not whether it were Real, or a Delusion. And so surprizing and un-hoped-for was our late Deliverance from the Inextricable Difficulties and Miseries we lay under, that some doubt, whether they are Redeemed, or under a Temptation; whether God has heard their Prayers, and rescued them from the Tyranny of Popery, or only tries their Loyalty. I dare pronounce nothing on this Occasion; but give me leave to wish, That those, who, out of Sincerity and Integrity, scruple what their Duty is, would also consider, What it is to *Conceive amiss* of so wonderful a Dispensation of Divine Providence, and the weighty Ill Consequences that attend it. And that those again on the other side, who with a full Persuasion set themselves to do the Business of the Nation, would make the Glory of God their highest Aim. And this being done, there is no Question, but in a very short time God himself will interpret the Great Work, he has wrought among us.

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But, as I said, the Restoration, in the Year 1660, did not Amend the Lives of Men, nor consequently secure the Peace and Felicity of the Nation: So the shutting the Door, in this Conjunction, against Popery, will as little avail us, if it be left open to Atheism; nor the Solicitous Provisions, made against Arbitrary Government, profit us, if Wickedness be suffered to Reign. The Anabaptistical Doctrine, *That Dominion is founded in Grace*, as that Sect understands it, is Execrable; but that no Dominion, no Property, is firm and stable, that is not founded in Grace, *i. e.* supported by Righteousness, is a Pious and Orthodox Persuasion. The spread of Vice is of large Extent in the Land, from the Noble to them that Trade. But as God of his Goodness has rescued us by an Heroick Arm from Persecution and Oppression; so he has given us a Double Example of Eminent Piety and Virtue to reclaim us from Vice: And if we shew, tho' we were prone to follow that which was Evil when 'twas in Fashion, we are  
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not so inclinable to imitate Virtue ; the Commandments of God are not to be left precarious, to be done or not done, as Men please ; but to be bound upon them by severe Laws and Penalties. And if Sin has taken so long and deep Root, that 'tis not to be pluck'd up without great Difficulty and Trouble, yet our Rulers, after the Example of Christ, must stoop and drink of these Troubled Waters, as the Means, both to lift up the Head of the Nation, and their own Heads to Glory and Immortality.

*To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
be ascribed all Honour and Glory, &c.*

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